



TESTIMONY
RAISED BILL 5120
AN ACT CONCERNING PRIVATE AND MUNICIPAL RECYCLING,
ZONING ORDINANCES & SOLID WASTE COLLECTION CONTRACTS

Good morning Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

My name is Ralph Eno. I am First Selectman in the Town of Lyme and a member of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns Board of Directors. My remarks reflect COST's position on Raised Bill 5120: An Act Concerning Private and Municipal Recycling, Zoning Ordinances and Solid Waste Collection Contracts.

Our primary concern still centers on provisions in section 5 of the bill. In past iterations the measure required any municipality providing curbside MSW collection to provide the same service for recyclables. COST perceived this as an unfunded mandate and testified in opposition. The present version includes a much appreciated exemption trigger if a community exceeds the statewide recycling average, but the mandate kicks in if it were to fall below that threshold.

COST recognizes the importance of reaching the state's targeted goal removing forty (40) per cent of our recyclables from our solid waste stream. It will reduce costs and ease pressure on precious landfill capacity. However, our members do not believe this is the time to create any new and potentially costly mandates with municipal budgets and the property taxpayers who fund them already pressed to the limit in our challenging economic times. Further, subsection b of section 5 poses difficulty as well. If a municipality does not provide its residents with curbside MSW pick up, the recycling collection mandate falls on the private haulers performing that service. These additional costs will undoubtedly be passed directly on to residents who will have no choice in the matter.

The legislative intent of 5120 is laudable, but that said the timing is problematic. Our cities and towns are making heroic efforts to avoid placing any additional burdens on our taxpayers as we struggle at all levels of government to get through this epic recession. COST respectfully asks that the committee think long and hard before including the new mandates in this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I would be happy to try to answer any questions.